

NEVADA Connections

Bringing Resources to Nevada's Adult Education Community

Volume 16 Number 9

May 2012

MPAEA 2012 recap

Members of the Crow Tribe and several Montana dignitaries kicked off the Mountain Plains Adult Association's 70th annual conference, "Implementing Career Pathways in Adult Education," in Helena April 11-14. More than 200 people attended. With 45 participants, Nevada provided the second largest state contingent, including presenters Dr. Sandra Ransel, Diann Knobel, Angela Andrade Holt, Teri Zutter, Jenny Wong, Eriko Sakamura, Tünde Csepelyi, Aiko Nagao, and Somi Yun.

MPAEA's 2013 conference will be held in Cheyenne, WY in mid-April. For more information, see www.mpaea.org or contact Nevada's representatives to the MPAEA Board:

- Kathleen Jameson (kjameson@lyon.k12.nv.us, 775/575-3409)
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Incoming MPAEA President Lily Beth Brazones presents outgoing President Brad Deeds Nevada's Award of Excellence.

Nevada is one of the eight western states comprising MPAEA.

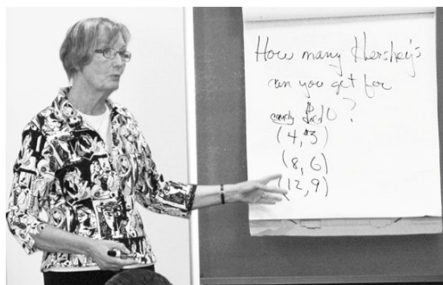
MPAEA is affiliated with the Commission on Adult Basic Education (COABE) and with the American Association for Adult and Continuing Education.

AAACE holds their 2012 conference November 4-9 in Las Vegas. This is an excellent opportunity to connect with the whole spectrum of adult education! Watch www.aaace.org for details.

The Northern Nevada Literacy Council contingent, from left: Bob Morris, Director Vicki Newell, David Weeks, Jacque Calvert, Marianne Rasmusson, and Mike Cronmiller. Not shown: Patricia Peterman.



Nevadan continues to make math meaningful



Although she may have “retired” from her position as professor of mathematics at El Camino College in 2001, veteran adult educator Myrna Manly hasn’t stopped working! She’s remained active in the Adult Numeracy Network, consulted on various projects at the national and international levels, and continues to work with states and programs facilitating professional learning workshops aimed at improving mathematics instruction to adults.

She recently facilitated a lively presentation to Nevada’s Adult Education Directors based on the September 2010 paper she coauthored

with Lynda Ginsburg, “[Algebraic Thinking in Adult Education](#).”

The Paper suggests ways to provide coherence among mathematical concepts for those who previously had trouble learning math. It connects mathematics to the real world, demonstrating its usefulness to those who have seen it as just an academic exercise. The authors recommend two significant and necessary changes to our concept of algebra and the ways we approach it in education:

- from thinking of algebra as one course to thinking of it as a content strand integrated into arithmetic instruction
- from thinking of algebra as merely manipulation skills to thinking of it as a means of representing and analyzing real situations

This fresh look at algebra and mathematics can result in instruction that appeals to mature students by addressing their needs in pursuit of a career and in their daily lives by actively involving them in solving meaningful problems.

Myrna can be reached at mmanly@earthlink.net, 775/851-3186.

[Accommodating Math Students with Learning Disabilities \(<http://nvae.us/5t>\)](#) describes mathematics-based learning disabilities such as dyscalculia and common problems that adult learners may encounter. The resource also provides some teaching strategies and accommodations for instructors working with adults with math learning disabilities.

Is your authenticity effective?

From “Authentic Activities and Materials for Adult ESL Learners,” Jiuhan Huang, Evie Tindall, and Deanna Nisbet. MPAEA’s *Journal of Adult Education*, Vol. 40, No. 1, 2011, pp 1-10.

This article reports on a survey study that investigated the types of authentic materials and activities that ESL teachers of adults utilize and deem successful in their classrooms. Data were gathered through the use of a researcher-developed questionnaire consisting of nine items. Thirty participants provided examples of authentic materials and activities they have successfully employed in adult ESL classrooms. Five thematic categories emerged from the data: employment, technology, consumer goods, consumer-related services, and citizenship/civic participation.

The authors conclude, “Although Communicative Language Teaching has been accepted as a dominant language teaching approach and is used as a framework in most textbooks, merely using texts that have an authentic appeal does not necessarily result in appropriate, meaningful, and successful instruction of adult ESL learners.”

The materials provided by the study are a helpful a resource for use inside and outside of the classroom — and a springboard for generating new ideas!

MPAEA *Journal* benefits members in many ways

MPAEA’s *Journal of Adult Education* is a refereed journal serving as a voice for the translation of theory. It (along with MPAEA’s newsletter) is now distributed electronically at no charge to MPAEA members. Co-editor Gary Conti encourages submissions: “Our goal as editors is to help you get your ideas into publishable form.”

The editors have created an additional publication, the *Information Series*, to address special topics focused on practical, research-based information for adult educators.

Visit www.mpaea.org for additional information.

Make your ideas matter — it’s all in how you tell the story!

TED presentation on giving great talks: <http://nvae.us/5s>

CSN's blended PD increases student outcomes

By Jodi Ruback, EL/Civics senior specialist, Adult Literacy & Language Program,
College of Southern Nevada, jodi.ruback@csn.edu, 702/651-4164

CSN's new EL/Civics professional development training has shown exemplary outcomes, for teachers as well as students!

The pilot program ran from September through February. Guided by EL/Civics Online's Master Teacher program (www.elcivicsonline.org), CSN instructors Traci Fenn, Elizabeth Lane, Kimberley Trueman, and Jennifer Turski facilitated multiple sessions around five training areas: ESL Foundations, Integrating US History into EL/Civics Instruction, Best Practices in Teaching U.S. Government, Naturalization, and Civic Engagement. Enrichment activities were added to the Web site's materials. Participating instructors shared their understanding of the principles presented in each module and best practices from their EL/Civics classrooms.

Materials were easily accessible and after the completion of a training module instructors were able to immediately implement the concepts and best practices discussed in the training sessions. For example, using the lesson planning formats in the ESL Foundations module, instructors tailored lessons from Ventures to their students' needs. They have used the methodology covered in the ESL Foundations sessions to improve their instruction and have been able to seamlessly incorporate information pertaining to US History, Government, and Naturalization into lessons using the ideas presented in those modules.

Lastly, instructors have begun to stress the importance of civic engagement by encouraging their students to examine their communities, determine changes that they would like to see, and discuss how they might be able to be involved in those changes. Students are encouraged to identify community resources they would like to access and activities they are involved in or would like to become involved in and to share this information with their classmates and instructors. Our instructors have also begun to plan field trips based on student interest and to invite guest speakers to classes.

CSN's EL/Civics Program of Instruction has already exceeded state-negotiated benchmarks in four out of six levels.

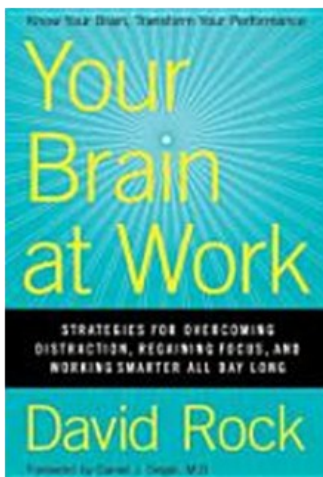
—Results through March 2012

The addition of this blended EL/Civics training to the Ventures training provided by Cambridge University Press has significantly strengthened the EL/Civics instruction at CSN. Student level completion and gains have significantly increased. The CSN EL/Civics Program is well on its way to meeting all state-negotiated levels, as similar or improved results are expected for the remainder of this fiscal year.

In addition to English Language instruction, the EL/Civics Program at CSN also offered an Advanced Civics Preparation class in both the morning and evening two days each week at the Sahara West Campus. Approximately ninety percent of the students who completed the Advanced Civics Preparation class and took the Naturalization Exam are now US Citizens! The success of these students is also a testament to the success of the EL/Civics Professional Development Program, as the material covered was used to supplement and build the existing curriculum.



Veteran Senior Specialist Jodi Ruback recently received TESOL's 2012 Virginia French Allen Award for Scholarship and Service in recognition of her professional insights, sharing of ideas, and her work on behalf of Southern Nevada CATESOL.



Work smarter

Your Brain at Work: Strategies for Overcoming Distraction, Regaining Focus, and Working Smarter All Day Long. Reviewed by Kit Prendergast, Reno-based Career and Life Coach (Kit@CareerConnectionsSN.com, 775/324-5151) in her April 2012 newsletter.

So many colleagues recommended this book that I just had to pick it up. And it's everything as promised.

Rock helps us understand the intricacies of brain science by taking us inside the thinking of two young professionals, Emily and Paul. He tells the story of their everyday work lives from the perspective of what's going on (scientifically) in their brains. He discusses what gets in the way of their career success and how we can move past those habits and behaviors that don't work for us anymore. A fascinating read!

This professional development project is a leadership activity funded by a grant from the Nevada State Department of Education, Workforce Investment Act, Title II (Adult Education and Family Literacy). There is no discrimination or denial of participation on the basis of race, color, sex, age, religion or religious creed, national origin, sexual orientation, ancestry, or disability.

Key adult ed events through 2012

- NAWDP (National Association of Workforce Development Professionals) Conference, May 7-9, Las Vegas, NV. <http://nvae.us/4h>
- CASAS National Summer Institute, June 12-14, San Diego, CA. <http://www.casas.org/training-and-support/SI>, casas-si@casas.org, 800/255-1036 ext 131
- NAE (Nevada Adult Educators) Professional Development Day, Oct. 6, Reno, NV. 775/575-3409; kjameson@lyon.k12.nv.us, <http://www.nvadulted.org/>
- National Career Pathways Network Conference, Oct. 17-19, Richmond, VA. <http://www.ncpn.info/2012-ncpn-conf.php>
- AAACE (American Association for Adult and Continuing Education) Conference, Nov. 4-9, (preconference Nov. 4-6,) Las Vegas, NV. <http://www.aaace.org/2012-conference>
- National Conference on Effective Transitions in Adult Education (National College Transition Network), Nov. 7-9, Providence, RI. www.collegetransition.org



**The meeting of two personalities is like the contact of two chemical substances:
if there is any reaction, both are transformed. —Carl Jung (1875–1961)**